

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-18. Canceled.

19. (currently amended) A method of optimizing the timing offsets with which data frames are transmitted over the Iur/Iub interfaces of a UMTS Terrestrial Radio Access Network, UTRAN, the method comprising:

for a given Iur/Iub interface or set of Iur/Iub interfaces over which identical user plane data is to be sent, defining a duration of a data frame receiving window for use by the receiving node(s);

transmitting data frames from a sending node with an initial timing offset;

at the or each receiving node, collecting and/or computing time of arrival statistics for received data frames;

periodically reporting said statistics to the sending node; and

adjusting the timing offset at the sending node on the basis of the received statistics.

20. (previously presented) A method according to claim 19, wherein the collected statistics include one or more of: the mean, minimum, maximum, and variance of times of arrival for data frames received during some time period.

21. (previously presented) A method according to claim 20 and comprising sending from the sending node to the or each receiving node instructions identifying the statistics to be collected at the receiving node and sent to the sending node.

22. (previously presented) A method according to claim 21, wherein said instructions identify the regularity with which the statistics must be sent, or events defining when the statistics should be sent.

23. (previously presented) A method according to claim 19 and comprising sending polling requests from the sending node to the or each receiving node instructing the return of statistics.

24. (previously presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein the sending node is one of a Radio Network Controller, RNC, or a NodeB, and the or each receiving node is the other of an RNC or NodeB.

25. (previously presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein said initial timing offset is sufficient to ensure a likelihood that the frames will be received at the or each receiving node within the defined receiving window.

26. (previously presented) A node for use in a UMTS Terrestrial Radio Access Network, UTRAN, the node comprising:

means for transmitting data frames to one or more receiving nodes via Iub/Iur interfaces with an initial timing offset;

means for reducing the timing offset in a stepwise manner; and

means for adjusting the timing offset in response to the receipt of late time of arrival error reports.

27. (previously presented) A node for use in a UMTS Terrestrial Radio Access Network, UTRAN, the node comprising:

means for transmitting data frames to one or more receiving nodes via Iub/Iur interfaces with an initial timing offset; and

means for receiving statistical data sent periodically from the or each receiving node and relating to the times of arrival of data frames at respective receiving nodes and for adjusting the timing offset on the basis of the received statistics.

28. (previously presented) A node according to claim 26, wherein the node is a Radio Network Controller or a NodeB.